



**U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES APPROVES FUNDS  
FOR PUERTO RICO TO HIRE MORE THAN 1,500 NEW POLICE  
OFFICERS**

***Thursday, April 23, 2009***

WASHINGTON, DC- The House of Representatives today approved a measure that would enable Puerto Rico to hire and train an estimated 1,562 law enforcement officers who will improve the security of our communities.

H.R. 1139, the Community Oriented Policy Services Improvements Act of 2009, will authorize \$1.25 billion for the COPS program and place more than 50,000 police officers on the streets nationwide.

In addition, the legislation authorizes State Attorneys General to recruit former members of the armed forces to serve as police officers in communities affected by the recent closure of a military base (*Troops-to-Cops Program*).

The bill also provides funding to hire community prosecutors to fight violent crime (*Community Prosecutors Program*) and to develop and deploy new technologies to prevent crime (*Technology Grants Program*).

When the COPS program was proposed in the mid-1990s, Pierluisi was serving as Puerto Rico's Attorney General and he worked with the Clinton Administration to obtain the program's passage in Congress.

"As someone whose own family has been deeply touched by violent crime, I am unbending in my belief that the most basic duty that the government owes its citizens is to ensure their personal security," said Pierluisi during debate over the bill on the House floor.

To date, Puerto Rico has received over \$160 million in funding from the COPS program. This funding has allowed Puerto Rico to hire and train approximately 3,500 police officers.

"No statistic can capture the true impact the COPS program has made. The numbers of lives saved, crimes prevented, and families spared the pain of losing a loved one—these numbers are beyond calculation," the Resident Commissioner said.